GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1237
ANSWERED ON:26.11.2001
SUSPENSION OF LICENCES OF SAW MILLS IN ARUNACHAL PRADESH
VSM (RETD.) COL. CHOUDHARY

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Hon`ble Supreme Court vide order dated January 15, 1998 permitted sale/auction of `illegally felled/seized timber logs` duly inventarised by the Government of Arunachal Pradesh and cleared by HPC;

(b) if so, whether some Saw and Veneer Mills were taken on hire by Forest Department to process such timber sold in Public Auctions and the same was processed under their supervision;

(c) if so, the facts thereof;

(d) whether licences and clearance given to such hired saw mills have been suspended;

(e) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(f) the steps taken by the Government to remedy the situation?

Answer

MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI T.R.BAALU)

(a)to(c) In accordance with Supreme Court ordersin Writ Petition (Civil) No.202/95, Arunachal Pradesh Forest Department had disposed off illegal timber seized by it. Pending compliance of para 7 (c) of Supreme Court order dated 15.1.1998 in Writ Petition (Civil) No.202/95, conversion of such timber was allowed in the specific wood based units cleared by the High Power Committee.

(d) to(f) On receipt of information, about transport of illegal timber from North-Eastern Region in the garb of legal timber, physical verification of about 200 wagons loaded with timber was got done. During physical verification and subsequent investigation, significant irregularities and illegalities were found. After issue of show cause notices, personal hearing and necessary investigations, the clearances given by the High Power Committee to wood based units, who were found to be the consignors of the illegal timber, have been revoked. Detailed guidelines have been issued to regulate movement of timber and timber products from the North-Eastern States.